

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is also, quite possibly illegal, immoral and against the public interest.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge. Part of their license is a charter with the citizens of this country. It is the responsibility of the FCC to police these people and assure they are not abusing their power.

I realize this may seem like a partisan thing because it is clearly an election (Kerry v. Bush) issue. However, I would feel just as strongly if the Democratic machine was using undue influence with the media to skew public perception and strongarm local media outlets. Sure we have the internet and access to information, but what about rural communities that have one paper, one radio station and one local news channel, all owned by the same media mogul? Where are they supposed to get fair and balanced broadcasting? From an organization that owns all the news and contributes the maximum amount to one side of a political campaign and then uses their resources to force one opinion on the people?

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.